



Department of Military & Veterans Affairs

Policy Statement

Subject: Political Activities and Campaigning

Effective Date: October 1, 2008

Summary: Provides for Guidance to State Personnel on Demonstration and Advocacy of Political Issues, Candidates, and/or Organizations at Work

Applicability: All State Personnel and Supervisors of State Personnel

Staff Proponent: Human Resources

Supercedes: None - New

A. Background

State Personnel Rule 1-17 states that employees may participate in political activities subject to state and federal laws. No state time or property may be used for this purpose. Additionally, the State Employee handbook states that while employees may participate in political activities subject to state and federal laws, no state facility or resource can be used for this purpose. State employees also may not campaign actively for any candidate on state time or in any manner calculated to exert the influence of state employment.

B. Purpose

This policy exists to foster DMVA's mission of serving the State of Colorado by encouraging discipline, uniformity, and esprit de corps through the subordination of personal political differences in favor of organizational unity that provides an efficient and productive work environment that is content-neutral. As our work is performed in support of a military institution, it is important that we exhibit political neutrality and conform with the requirements that are expected of our military counterparts when engaging in political activities and to ensure that individual political preferences are not to be mistaken with political preferences of the Department of Military & Veterans Affairs.

C. Policy

The examples that follow provide a list of restrictions and allowable activities for DMVA employees. While the list is not all-inclusive, it does address the most common concerns and issues. Additional questions should be directed to the Human Resources office.

Examples of restrictions on political activities during work time for DMVA State employees:

- You may not prepare or distribute written or electronic materials supporting or opposing a measure, candidate or petition. You also may not direct a subordinate or co-worker to prepare or distribute such materials.

The table provided below is a general summary of permitted and prohibited activities. Specific questions about political activities should be directed to Human Resources at 720-250-1520.

ACTIVITY	PERMITTED	NOT PERMITTED
PUBLIC PRESENTATIONS	During the work day employees may respond to unsolicited questions with strictly factual answers regarding a campaign issue. Those answers should not tend to urge a particular vote.	It is a violation of state law to campaign or support a political cause while "on the clock." Staff need to use their best judgment to avoid the perception of championing a cause as a state employee. During work time employees may not work to promote or defeat a candidate or ballot issue. "Work time" includes all times employees are on duty during regular hours or in attendance as a work requirement beyond regular work hours.
	Employees may make presentations that express a position on a ballot issue or candidate off the work site and outside of employee work hours.	Employees may not: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ use their official authority or influence to interfere with an election; ▪ engage in political activity while wearing an official uniform; ▪ engage in political activity while using a government vehicle.
STATE OWNED MATERIALS AND EQUIPMENT	A state department may expend state resources to create an unbiased factual summary on any issue of official concern before the electorate that includes arguments both for and against a proposal. The summary may not contain a conclusion or opinion in favor of or against any particular issue. The "Blue Book" prepared by Colorado Legislative Council is a good source for this type of information on statewide ballot issues.	State-owned materials and equipment cannot be used to prepare, post, sort, or distribute any materials or information advocating a position concerning an election. This includes the use of email, fax machines, copy machines, paper, telephones, bulk mailing permits, etc.
STATE OWNED FACILITIES	State-owned facilities may be used by organizations to present information and/or literature in accordance with department access policies for community use of department facilities, if the facilities are available to all non-department organizations on the same terms.	
INTERACTING WITH OTHER EMPLOYEES		Employees should not take any stand on a candidate or ballot issue with fellow employees while on duty. Employees shall not distribute to fellow employees any materials that express a position on campaign issues during work time.